Garden Talk

By
Appomattox Garden Club

Let's talk about growing amaryllis for indoor gardens. The giant blooms and brilliant colors make the amaryllis the showpiece of any indoor garden. Each bulb produces at least one stalk with three to six lilylike blooms—white, red, pink, or striped. And when the bloom if gone, the green, straplike leaves are handsome.

If you are buying new bulbs, select large, heavy ones. The best results are obtained from bulbs about the size of a teacup. For planting, select a pot with diameter only two or three inches greater than that of the bulb. If the pot is too large, the amaryllis will spend itself in root growth and will have nothing at all left for the flower.

For potting, use a soil made of loam mixed with an equal amount of fine peat moss, old cow manure, or leafmold. Mix well. Dust the bases of the bulbs with a root-inducing hormone dust, and preserve all the live roots. Set the bulb with all of the thick neck and part of the shoulder—a full upper third of the bulb—above the soil. Planting too deep may discourage bloom.

Leave the soil about an inch below the rim of the pot so you can water it easily. Store the potted bulb in a dark place at a temperature of from 45 to 60 degrees. Moisten the soil once, and then keep it almost dry.

Plan for at least six weeks for root development, then about four more weeks to produce the flowers. When growth reaches the stage that buds show, bring the plant gradually to room temperature and find a sunny east window for it. Begin watering it sparingly until leaves show, then water generously. An amaryllis in flower needs water daily, but not full sun.

During the period of flower development, very little water is needed, because until the bulb has new roots it cannot utilize a lot of moisture. Strong leaf growth right after the flower bud has cleared the neck of the bulb indicates that new roots are underway, and from that time on the plant needs more water.

Beginners, and even well informed window gardeners, sometimes complain that while they successfully flower the newly purchased amaryllis bulbs the first season and perhaps the second year, the bulbs then become smaller and flower unsatisfactorily afterward. The sole reason for this is failure to keep the bulbs actively growing during the summer months. Since the flowers are produced mainly at the expense of the bulb, it is the job of the leaves after the blooming to build up what has been lost. But if you fail to push leaf and root growth with food, water, and sun during the summer, the bulb actually shrinks.

The simplest way to insure summer growth is to turn the bulbs out of the pots in late May and plant in rich soil, in a sunny position, watering and feeding freely, preferably with liquid cow manure. The plants make heavy foliage if they are in vigorous health.

Lift the bulbs carefully with full roots in early October or before the first heavy frost, and place them in boxes of earth in the basement or cellar. Keep them almost dry. When the foliage has withered, clean the bulbs and inspect them for signs of disease or insects. Mealy bugs and daffodil-fly maggots are their deadly enemies. Mealy bugs, those same cottony-looking pests that affect your African-violets, can do a great deal of injury at the neck, while the maggots can eat out the heart of a bulb completely. If left, they may cause crooked flower stems and distorted foliage. Clean thoroughly, cutting back the neck of the bulb fairly hard and using powdered tobacco. Touching mealy bugs with rubbing alcohol will kill instantly, and will not hurt the bulb. Make a tiny applicator with a toothpick and small bit of cotton.

After inspection, pack the bulbs base down in trays, and cover the roots with dry soil. Keep them where the temperature is near 60 degrees for at least three months rest. They need this rest, for when they are dug the bud development is not sufficiently advanced. Repotting should start when the buds first push up. If the roots are sound, leave them, otherwise trim them off close to the basal plate with a sharp knife. Then dust the base of the bulb with hormone powder. Repot as before, leaving in a dark place, at 60 degrees or less, until the flower stems begin to stretch up. Those bulbs that fail to show buds should be kept dry and cool, as potting and watering will merely induce leaf growth.

If you cannot plant amaryllis outdoors for summer growth, do this: Sometime during the resting season (after the leaves have withered) remove as much topsoil as possible without disturbing the roots and replace ti with a 50-50 mixture of loam and rotted manure with a teaspoonful of bonemeal.

In time, a bulb will form some new bulbs along its sides, but wait until the new bulbs are ready to fall off by themselves before you remove them. Treat them as the mother plant.

You can just about name the price you want to pay for an amaryllis bulb. It may cost a few cents or several dollars. But the cheapest bulbs will usually produce small flowers with an impure reddish color. The most expensive are the imported Dutch hybrids, with blooms as large as 10 inches across, and near-perfect colors. Between these extremes are many good American strains that can be had for a dollar or so.

Let's count time and plan to have a window full of gorgeous color when winter comes.

Subscription rate: $2.00 a year; payable in advance.

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Health and Beauty

Do you know your ideal weight? The desirable weight for different builds can be determined to a large extent by height. To determine stature, consider the size of your hands. Women who wear gloves smaller than size six generally have small frame. Gloves larger than size seven mark the large frame. In between, ranging, from sizes six to seven, will be of medium frame.

Basal metabolism tests on individuals at different ages, show that the body, just to keep alive, from age thirty, needs daily about ten calories per pound of ideal body weight. Under thirty years of age, the need is slightly greater—about twelve calories per pound.

If you feel you would like to do something to improve your figure, it is well to know that exercise molds and beautifies the body. While you must watch your diet in order to control the pounds, it is exercise that helps to whittle down the inches or build up a curve.

If you are going to start a regular set of exercises, to start slow yourself about ten minutes a day for exercising. It is not important whether you do it in the morning or evening, just as long as you do it every day without fail. You should wait until at least an hour and a half after eating before you exercise. Taken too soon before going to bed may keep you from sleeping.

If you are interested in sports — tennis, golf, skating, archery, swimming, — find some time for these activities. This is a wonderful way to stay young and graceful — and slender.

Sports may not be your dish. However, almost everyone enjoys a walk—even if it is just a couple of turns around the block. Working in your garden is a good way to keep trim and fit. Fresh air and sun are good for the whole general body tone—and body tone is important if you want to stay young-looking.

If you work hard in an office all day long and come home beat, you will find that a round of mild exercise or a brisk walk will make you feel much less worn. Don't fall into the habit of coming home from work, falling into a comfortable chair, getting up only to go to the table for dinner to eat a large meal and then to bed. If you work at a desk all day, this kind of "resting" is the worst possible thing you could do.

More Nitrogen; Less Lime

Farmers are using five times as much nitrogen now as 15 years ago, but less lime. From a peak of 30 million tons of lime applied in 1947, current use is down to 20 million tons. Unless the use of lime keeps pace with the use of nitrogen, say agronomists at VPI, serious problems of acidity can develop in the soil, especially when the acidity penetrates the subsoil. Some areas have already encountered this problem.

A chalkboard in the farm shop is handy for listing repair jobs so you won't forget them, say VPI agricultural specialists.

EXPERT SWIMMER DROWNS

Oakland, N. J.- Morton R. Cahill, 23, expert swimming instructor, was showing Boy Scouts how to get rid of clothes in the water. Suddenly Cahill, fully clothed, vanished beneath the surface and did not come up. Horrified Scouts watched as another instructor dived to find him without success. His body was found four hours later, in about ten feet of water in the lake.

ALBATROSS AIDS SAILOR

Sydney, Australia.- The crew of a seaman, who had fallen overboard, from the liner Orcades, was made possible when came a symbol of disaster in "Ancient Mariner," landed on chest of the sailor. The seaman obscured by waves until albatross landed on him and served as a beacon to the rescuers.

FLASH:
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ek Larger Advertising Fund Attract Tourists to Virginia

hich has had a monthly in- in out-of-state passenger car for 79 consecutive months, ed with the same month of evious year. Between 1949, year of the Virginia Travel ion's operation, and 1955, the al year for which we have ate Highway Commission fig- the increases ran as high as cent over the preceding year. the last big year of increase fiscal 1955, when "foreign" dropped 9.10 per cent. Ot this ortunately every state in the ewide to the fact that travel business. KENTUCKY ap- ed $490,000 for the year ed to siphon central west- ations down U. S. 25. FLOR- ised its appropriation to $1,- NORTH CAROLINA be- concentrate approximately 00 a year in publicity and ad- ng, with the Great Smokies, lle and Blue Ridge Parkway ogical travel destination ten The result of this has been Southwestern Virginia, par- ly along U. S. 11. TENNES- ed also to treat travel as ar source of income, with 00 a year appropriated for advertising. MEXICO, which had cut out its advertising for a year, and had a disastrous season as a result, got back into the picture with a large advertising fund. NEW ENGLAND FORD DEALERS discovered they had to do something and consequently put $250,000 a year in the pot to advertise New England, and the NEW ENGLAND COUNCIL revitalized its program, raised a large advertising fund and went to work to get travel trade. NEW YORK also appropriated $500,000 to bolster its slipping travel business, and New York City accomodations financed its Convention Bureau in an all-out effort to bring tourists to New York City. (New York City has started to cut deeply into our school graduation tour business).

WHAT HAS BEEN THE RESULT? Our passenger cars from other states visiting Virginia continued to come, but between the 1953 fiscal year and State Highway Commission reports for fiscal 1954, our increase was cut to 2.01 per cent, and in fiscal 1955, our increase over 1954 was only 0.31 per cent (less than a third of one per cent.)

For the year ending June 30, 1956, the Virginia Travel Council reports that the State Highway Commission's figures will show that our overall out-of-state travel will show a slight decrease, for the first time in eight years.

It is to be hoped that the Jamestown Festival next year, the results of which will be split in the fiscal years of 1957-1958, will bring travel back in the column of a growing industry.

While Virginia has $75,000 more for the current year to spend on advertising, we point to increases almost everywhere among the other states in paid advertising appropriations. MISSOURI raised its travel advertising this year from $800,000 to $1,000,000. FLORIDA has announced it will request $2,000,000 for all future years.

In the face of these figures that the Board of the Virginia Travel Council recently adopted resolutions to begin a campaign at once to get Virginia's next legislative session to raise the state advertising fund to $500,000 a year.

The Virginia Travel Council hopes that every interested organization in Virginia will join in this campaign, and that every Virginian interested in the growth of this source of economic revenue, now considered by the Council as second in economic importance to Virginia, will aid to see that this is accomplished.

FLYING BURGLAR

Marshall, Texas.- In respeonce to a frantic call from Miss Ponta Brittenum that a burglar was trying to get in her house, police arrived to discover that the culprit was a flying squirrel. He was playing on a window screen.

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In Fashion Now

Something cute the young beach set will find appealing is a gold anklet adorned with tiny gold bells much in the manner of an Indian dancing girl. These are fashioned out of a new material which looks as much like gold as gold itself, but costs very little. They will not change color with the first dip in the salt water — indeed will not lose its golden good looks ever.

There is a new color to be found being fashioned out of this gold-looking material. The detail found on the more expensive pieces is lovely. The material is very light weight and is perfect for the popular, big bold earrings.

There is a new color tobe found on the beach this summer — a pale green called "green water." Sounds cool as the color looks. There is a whole line of beachwear by one of our leading beachwear designers made of this color. It will not fade and is flattering to almost all color types.

It is smart to wear fake cherries, tiny apples and raspberries, mixed flowers woven into crownlike decorations, on top of a sleek hairdo. Perhaps this idea was inspired by Princess Grace, but it has gone over big in many West Florida vacation spots. It is possible to look neat and well groomed with the help of these new crowns. They are easy to make or can be bought ready-made.

We have been told that it is not wise for any women over 35 to allow herself to become deeply tanned in the summer. At this age, a tanned skin looks like an old orange and every line you have so carefully hidden through the winter becomes prominent. A famous French designer goes on to say that, "Too many of us worship the sun and end up looking not healthy but wizened."

This same designer was full of compliments for American casual clothes. She said, "For so little the American girl can look so well."

The secret may be that the average American girl looks pretty good to begin with — to quote an American male, who has done a bit of traveling around the world.

Could Be

Willie: "Mama, do people that lie ever go to heaven?"

Mother: "Why, of course not, Willie."

Willie: "Gee, it must be lonesome up there with only God and George Washington."

PEACH VARIETY PICTURE CHANGES

The peach variety picture is changing rapidly, says Fred R. Dreiling, associate horticulturist at VPI.

Dreiling says the Elberta variety still is important in many localities but is gradually losing ground to superior varieties.

With fewer Elbertas being planted, Dreiling says, the trend is toward such varieties as Dixigem, Redhaven, Erly-Red-Fre, Sullivan's Early Elberta and other early varieties.

He notes that the type of marketing the grower plans has a definite bearing on the number of varieties which should be planted.

If the grower ships peaches exclusively, two or three varieties, or four at the most, should be enough. But if peaches are to be shipped and sold locally as well, four to five varieties would be best. If peaches are intended entirely for the local market, five to eight varieties should be grown.

Dreiling has some comments on some of the peach varieties he feels are among the better ones.

The Erly-Red-Fre is the earliest variety of any quality which is recommended for planting. The fruit is highly colored, attractive, and of good quality. However, the flesh is white and may be a little soft. It ripens 40 days before Elberta.

The Redhaven is one of the most promising varieties being planted at present. The fruit is attractive, and the flesh is orange-yellow with a pleasing flavor. The peach has a smooth texture, and is one of the best for freezing. However, it requires heavy thinning to obtain satisfactory fruit size. It ripens about 30 days before Elberta.

Golden Jubilee is one of the older established varieties, and is still holding its own. The quality is average, but it is usually of good size. It is easy to peel and is a freestone. It ripens about 26 days before Elberta.

Triogem is another variety which attains good size, is bright yellow and usually freestone.

Sunhigh has about the best flavor of any variety tested at VPI. However, it is a shy bearer in some areas and is susceptible to bacterial spot. But it will command premium prices, and ripens about 17 days before Elberta.

Halehaven is a variety which develops good size and has a solid red color. It is freestone and above average in quality. It ripens about 14 days before Elberta.

Sullivan's Early Elberta is somewhat brighter than the regular Elberta, and the quality is regarded as slightly superior. It ripens about a week before the regular Elberta.

Of the Elberta, Dreiling says it will continue to be important to many Virginia orchards for years to come.

Around Your Home

By Frances Dell

"It's too hot to cook," is a common statement made by almost all housewives this time of year. In all but a few sections of the country, it is quite true. Not only is it very unpleasant to cook a big hot meal, but hot food is not too appealing right now.

Look through your salad recipes. You will find many of them easy to fix and nutritional, even for growing children. Chicken salad, tuna, veal, beef and ham are great favorites.

Dieticians tell us that every meal should include one hot item to aid digestion. This can be a hot drink, soup or vegetabels.

Cold baked ham, potato salad, and hot baked beans - chicken salad, sliced tomatoes and hot fresh garden peas. Corn-on-the-cob is hard to beat and goes well with any number of cold meats and salads.

Try to do as much of your cooking as possible in the cooler morning hours. Also, don't forget about the favoriate of all ages—a picnic. Hamburgers, hotdogs, steaks, cooked in the back yard, seem to taste better and cooking outdoors in the summer takes away much of the drudgery.

Outdoor cooking is so popular now that hundreds of books have been written on the subject. If you can get the man of the house interested—you've got it made.

Take advantage of the delicious summer fruits in season now. Unusual combinations always give any meal a festive air.

Planned with thought, it is possigle to stay fairly cool while you cook for a family.

Meat animals slaughtered under Federal inspection and examined for cleanliness and wholesomness currently number about 100 million annually. Only about 1-4 of 1 per cent of animals inspected in recent years are found unfit for food.

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